

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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GENERAL MEETING

TOPIC: The Disarmament
Movement in the US

6:30 SEPT. 9

407 S. DEARBORN
EVERYONE INVITED!

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TO BE ANNOUNCED

O...SEPT. 10th 1:00 Federal Plaza

8 PM Aug. 18

CrossCurrents

3208 N. Wilton Belmont 'L'

Walk for Peace Coalition

CALL... 427-2538

Nagasaki 1945



El Salvador 1982

REMEMBER HIROSHIMA/NAGASAKI

Two atomic bombs were dropped on Japan on August 6th and 9th, 1945. Over 200,000 Japanese people were killed instantly. Thousands of survivors are still among us, in Japan and here in Chicago.

Why were the bombs dropped?

The question seems almost silly. Hold in your mind the history taught you in junior high. It goes something like this: dropping the bomb "saved the lives of thousands and thousands of young Americans." (Harry S. Truman)

The truth is a different story.

✓Neither target, neither Hiroshima nor Nagasaki, had any military importance.

✓Realizing that they were defeated, the Japanese rulers had begun requesting peace negotiations with the allies in May, 1945. The second bombing took place only three days after the first, too short an interval for the Japanese to investigate and then surrender.

✓Both bombings took place to test weapons previously unused in combat. Hiroshima was destroyed by a bomb containing uranium; Nagasaki was destroyed by a plutonium device. No photographs had been possible during the Hiroshima bombing, Nagasaki was used to supply aerial photographic proof.

As Admiral William Leahy, chief of staff to President Roosevelt, said, "It is my opinion that the use of this barbarous weapon at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of no material assistance in our war against Japan. The Japanese were already defeated and were ready to surrender because of the effective sea blockade and the successful bombing of the conventional weapons."

So why were the bombs dropped?

There are two reasons: the need to establish the United States as the pre-eminent world power and the deeply-rooted racism held towards Japanese people.

Racism meant that the atomic bomb (a weapon promoted, designed and built largely by scientists of European origin to use against Nazi Germany, a country that was also developing an atomic weapon) was used against Japan, which was known to have no atomic capability. Racism meant the internment of Japanese Americans in concentration camps in the U.S. And it meant that a bill to sterilize Japanese-American women failed by one vote in Congress during 1945.

If these facts are hard to digest, recall that Black men were used as guinea pigs for injections of syphilis during that period, and that the involuntary sterilization rate of Native American women is still over 30%.

The dropping of the bombs did establish the U.S. as the foremost world power. And, like a hold-up man who draws a gun during a robbery, but does not fire it, the United States continued to use nuclear weapons. Since the end of World War II, there have been at least 12 threats, including those against Korea and China in 1950 and 1953, China in 1958, Vietnam in 1954, 1968 and 1969; during the Berlin crisis in 1961 and during the Cuban missile crisis in 1962. Most of the threats, like those during the Vietnam War, were made in secret. The most recent and most public have been the Carter Doctrine on the Middle East in 1980 and Reagan's "limited nuclear war" scenario for Europe.

This is the actual threat of the start of nuclear war in the world. As a T-shirt sold on the U.S. Subic Naval Base in the Philippines says, "Remember Hiroshima and Nagasaki! F--K WITH US AND WE'LL DO IT AGAIN!"

It is not "everyones" fault

The cycle of escalation has been repeated a number of times since World War II: oppressed peoples in the Third World rebel against exploitation and foreign domination; political, economic, and military interests commit the U.S. to an endlessly expanding defense of the repressive regime; escalation is justified by presenting the conflict as West versus East, "freedom" versus "Communism", white versus black, brown, or yellow—and the stage is set for the use of nuclear weapons.

The whole world is now threatened with this possibility. When England sailed against Argentina to fight over the Falklands/Malvinas, they sent nuclear warhead-equipped subs (and the parting words of an admiral, "We hope it will not be necessary to use the H-bomb.") Every incident or war in the Middle East must be viewed with the knowledge that the U.S. has stated that it will use nuclear weapons to protect our "strategic interests" there.

Central America must also be included in this list. The use of U.S. "tactical" weapons has not been ruled out in fighting a war that 71% of the U.S. population does not want to see U.S. soldiers involved in. The inventor of the "clean" neutron bomb has said that it would be more useful in situations where the combatants are separated—as in Central America—than Central Europe, where troops and tanks face each other only yards away. Ronald Reagan's protest that the U.S. military was prevented from "going all out"—nuking the Vietnamese people—must be remembered in light of this.

It is 37 years since the dropping of the first atomic bomb. Now there are over 50,000 warheads more powerful than that bomb in existence. There are 40 nations which could possess an atomic bomb by 1990. The nuclear age penetrates every aspect of our lives, much like the radioactive Strontium-90 remains in the bones of all the people who grew up in the era of atmospheric nuclear tests.

Knowledge of these facts alone is not power; most people who have thought thoroughly about this threat to life on earth have at first become

depressed, since the great.

But there is a fact the American people use of nuclear weapons. Elsborg points out "Henry Kissinger Vietnamese (in 19 the war massively nuclear weapons, Why then was the on himself gives the Americans in the violently against the on November 15, Moratorium action against Death...A ment kept him from first year in office. protest actions—v Nixon kept as s ultimatum—has p combat use of nuclear far."

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depressed, since the danger is so immediate and great.

But there is a fact that is important to remember: the American people have already prevented the use of nuclear weapons at least once. As Daniel Ellsberg points out,

"Henry Kissinger conveyed the warning to the Vietnamese (in 1969) that Nixon would escalate the war massively, including the possible use of nuclear weapons, if they did not accept his terms. Why then was the escalation not carried out? Nixon on himself gives the reason... There were too many Americans in the streets, demonstrating non-violently against the war, on October 15 and again on November 15, 1969, the days of the Vietnam Moratorium actions and the Washington March against Death... As he saw it, the anti-war movement kept him from ending the war—his way—his first year in office. From another point of view, the protest actions—whose actual power and effect Nixon kept as secret from the public as his ultimatum—has prolonged the moratorium on the combat use of nuclear weapons by a dozen years so far."

from *Protest and Survive*

It is not "everyone's" fault that the United States has nuclear weapons, most of the U.S. population was not even born when the decisions were made to develop the arsenal of world destruction. Few own stock in Union Carbide, Kerr-McGee, and the multitude of armament corporations that have promoted the \$1.5 trillion military budget. Fewer still are Congresspeople (some of who support the Nuclear Freeze Campaign in words, yet voted to fund the MX missile, which is designed as a "first-strike" weapon) or generals with the power to set policy.

But just as the people of the U.S.—and the people of Vietnam—ended a war no one ever voted to begin, so can the decision be made to dismantle the arsenal of death. The choice is this: to maintain the nuclear and conventional arsenal in order to enable U.S. intervention wherever "our interests are threatened", and thereby risk the destruction of the earth—or join with the liberation movements and world-wide disarmament movement seeking real peace.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nagasaki 194

DISARMAMENT

COALITION MEETING...

6:30 AUG. 12

GENERAL MEETING

TOPIC: The Disarmament
Movement in the US

6:30 SEPT. 9

407 S. DEARBORN
EVERYONE INVITED!

BENEFIT

Heavy Manners

BOHEMIA

TO BE ANNOUNCED

RECLAIM CHICAGO...SEPT. 10th

1:00 Federal Plaza

Radioactive Review

Artists Against The Arms Race

8 PM Aug. 18

CrossCurrents

3208 N. Wilton Belmont 'L'

June 12 / Walk for Peace Coalition

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